

11/6/69

Mr. Curt Gentry  
439 Chestnut St.,  
San Francisco, Calif.

Dear Mr. Gentry,

I have never seen Barbara O'neal's book but had wanted to read it. By coincidence, a friend who knew this saw it shortly after you called and sent it to me. I then read it but until this morning couldn't recall your last name. So I am late writing to ask you a few questions about it. Perhaps more occurred to me then, but preoccupied with my own work, I may have forgotten them.

To me, throughout her book there are certain implausibilities, and I wonder if it was without official objection or with official blessing. Do you any idea?

For example, she claims (p.58) that she was spirited out of Turkey, with absolutely no knowledge at all that the plane was down, on May 6, yet on page 73, she says that the day before, five days after her husband was down, Khruschev announced "An American bendit plane" had been shot down over Soviet territory May 1".

Is it conceivable no one at the base had the remotest idea, that none of them suggested this to her - that she didn't know before she was "spirited out" that it had happened or suspected that her husband was involved? I find all of this hard to believe. And I also wonder why the spooks waited so long, knowing as they must have, immediately, that their bird was down, to get her back inside the U.S.

On page 19 she quotes a letter she wrote John W. McSweeney, Director, Office of Soviet Union Affairs, Department of State, after the trial. In it she also expresses thanks to "you and Mr. Snyder for your help". Do you know who Mr. Snyder is and whether or not he was then in the USSR?

Hope your book is coming along well. I look forward to reading it. It can be an important contribution to understanding one of the world's closer shaves, perhaps to eliminating others in the future.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg